

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (canceled)

Claim 2 (currently amended): The combination according to claim [[1]] 3, further comprising photosensitive means wherein, when at least some said emitted light is transmitted by said fiber optic means, said photosensitive means is capable of responding to said transmitted light so as to indicate the presence of at least some said transmitted light.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A ~~[[The]]~~ combination according to claim 1 ~~suitable for detecting damage in an object, said combination comprising fiber optic means and triboluminescent means each being adaptable to association with said object so that a mechanical event attendant said damage is capable of causing said triboluminescent means to emit light at least some of which is transmissible by said fiber optic means,~~ wherein:

said fiber optic means includes outer casing means and inner transmissive means;

at least a portion of said outer casing means is capable of allowing at least some said emitted light to pass therethrough so as to reach said inner transmissive means; and

said inner transmissive means is capable of transmitting at least some said emitted light which has passed through said outer casing means.

Claim 4 (original): The combination according to claim 3, wherein:

said at least a portion of said outer casing means is at least two portions of said outer casing means; and

each said portion of said outer casing means is capable of allowing at least some said emitted light of a particular wavelength to pass therethrough; and

said particular wavelength differs for at least two said portions of said outer casing means.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A ~~[[The]] combination according to claim 1 suitable for detecting damage in an object, said combination comprising fiber optic means and triboluminescent means each being adaptable to association with said object so that a mechanical event attendant said damage is capable of causing said triboluminescent means to emit light at least some of which is transmissible by said fiber optic means,~~ wherein said fiber optic means includes open tip means, said open tip means being devoid of said outer casing means so as to allow at least some said emitted light to reach said inner transmissive means.

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim ~~[[6]]~~ 18, wherein at least one said fiber optic line is situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with an external portion of said structure.

Claim 8 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim ~~[[6]]~~ 18,

wherein at least one fiber optic line is situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with an internal portion of said structure.

Claim 9 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim [[6]] 15, wherein at least one fiber optic line is situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is at least one of the following:

- in communication with an external portion of said structure;
- in communication with an internal portion of said structure; and
- in communication with both an external portion and an internal portion of said structure.

Claim 10 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim [[6]] 18, wherein:

said structure is an overall structure including a laminar composite structure having plural lamina; and

at least one said fiber optic line is situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is positioned between two adjacent said lamina.

Claim 11 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim [[6]] 18, wherein:

said structure is an overall structure including a fiber-reinforced matrix composite structure having a matrix phase and plural fiber reinforcements situated in said matrix phase; and

at least one said fiber optic line is situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is

positioned within said matrix phase so as to function as a said fiber reinforcement.

Claim 12 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim [[6]] 18, wherein:

said structure is an overall structure including a matrix composite structure having a matrix phase and plural constituents situated in said matrix phase;

each said constituent is selected from the group consisting of fiber reinforcement, particle reinforcement and particle filler; and

at least some said triboluminescent elements are integrated with said matrix composite structure whereby each said triboluminescent element constitutes at least a part of a said constituent.

Claim 13 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim [[6]] 15, wherein said triboluminescent elements are integrated with said structure so that at least one of the following sets of conditions obtains:

(a) at least one said fiber optic line is situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with an external portion of said structure, and at least some said triboluminescent elements are sufficiently proximate said fiber optic portion communicating with said external structure portion;

(b) at least one said fiber optic line is situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with an internal portion of said structure, and at least some said triboluminescent elements are sufficiently proximate said fiber optic portion communicating

with said internal structure portion; and

(c) at least one said fiber optic line is situated so that a first portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with an external portion of said structure and so that a second portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with an internal portion of said structure, at least some said triboluminescent elements are sufficiently proximate said first fiber optic portion communicating with said external structure portion, and at least some said triboluminescent elements are sufficiently proximate said second fiber optic portion communicating with said internal structure portion.

Claim 14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus ~~as recited in claim 14, wherein~~
~~comprising:~~

~~a structure;~~

~~at least one fiber optic line, each said fiber optic line being connectable to a
photodetector and being situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is in communication
with said structure; and~~

at least one triboluminescent element, each said triboluminescent element being
integrated with said structure and being sufficiently proximate a said fiber optic line so that,
upon an occurrence of damage to said structure:

~~an accompanying mechanical action upon said triboluminescent element results in
a luminescent emission of light by said triboluminescent element; and~~

at least a portion of said luminescently emitted light is transmissible to said photodetector via said fiber optic line;
wherein at least a section of each said fiber optic line portion communicating with said structure is permeable to light;
wherein at least a portion of said luminescently emitted light permeates at least one said light-permeable section so that at least a portion of said permeated luminescently emitted light is transmissible to said photodetector;
wherein at least two sections of each said fiber optic line portion communicating with said structure are permeable to light; and
wherein each said light-permeable section is permeable to light characterized by a different wavelength.

Claim 16 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim [[14]] 15, wherein each said light-permeable section is one of:

a longitudinal section of the corresponding said fiber optic line portion; and
an end section of the corresponding said fiber optic line portion.

Claim 17 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim [[14]] 15, wherein said photodetector is producible of an indication of at least a portion of said transmitted permeated luminescently emitted light.

Claim 18 (currently amended): ~~Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim 14, wherein~~

comprising:

a structure;

at least one fiber optic line, each said fiber optic line being connectable to a photodetector and being situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with said structure; and

at least one triboluminescent element, each said triboluminescent element being integrated with said structure and being sufficiently proximate a said fiber optic line so that, upon an occurrence of damage to said structure:

an accompanying mechanical action upon said triboluminescent element results in a luminescent emission of light by said triboluminescent element; and

at least a portion of said luminescently emitted light is transmissible to said photodetector via said fiber optic line;

wherein each said fiber optic line includes an outer coaxial fiber optic portion and an inner coaxial fiber optic portion;

at least a portion of said luminescently emitted light is transmissible to said photodetector via said inner coaxial fiber optic portion; and

wherein at least a section of each said fiber optic line portion communicating with said structure has a corresponding section of said outer coaxial fiber optic portion that is permeable to light; and

wherein, as to each said light-permeable section of said outer coaxial fiber optic portion, upon a said occurrence of damage to said structure at least a portion of said luminescently emitted light sufficiently permeates said outer coaxial fiber optic portion of at least one said

light-permeable section so that at least a portion of said permeated luminescently emitted light is transmissible to said photodetector via said inner coaxial fiber optic portion.

Claim 19 (canceled)

Claim 20 (currently amended): Damage-autosensitive apparatus as recited in claim 19, wherein comprising:

a structure;

a photodetector;

at least one fiber optic line, each said fiber optic line being connected to said photodetector and being situated so that a portion of said fiber optic line is in communication with said structure, each said fiber optic line including an outer coaxial fiber optic portion and an inner coaxial fiber optic portion, said outer coaxial fiber optic portion including at least one light-permeable section, said light-permeable section being permeable to light so that light reaches said inner coaxial fiber optic portion; and

at least one triboluminescent element, each said triboluminescent element being integrated with said structure and being sufficiently proximate a said fiber optic line so that, upon an occurrence of damage to said structure:

an accompanying mechanical action upon said triboluminescent element results in

a luminescent emission of light by said triboluminescent element;

each said fiber optic line includes an outer coaxial fiber optic portion and an inner coaxial fiber optic portion;

~~wherein upon said occurrence of damage to said structure~~

~~at least a portion of said luminescently emitted light is transmitted to said photodetector via said inner coaxial fiber optic portion; and~~

~~at least a portion of said luminescently emitted light sufficiently permeates said outer coaxial fiber optic portion of at least one said light-permeable section so that at least a portion of said permeated luminescently emitted light is transmitted to said photodetector via said inner coaxial fiber optic portion; and~~

~~as to each said light-permeated light-permeable section, said photodetector produces an indication of at least a portion of said transmitted permeated luminescently emitted light.~~

Claim 21 (canceled)

Claim 22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (canceled)

Claim 24 (currently amended): A method ~~as defined in claim 23 of sensing the damage condition of an object~~, said method further comprising:

~~integrating triholuminescent material with said object;~~

~~providing at least one [[said]] fiber optic line; and [[,]] wherein:~~

~~associating each said fiber optic line with said object and with a photosensitive device so~~

that, following a damage-causing event accompanied by a mechanical action upon at least some said integrated triboluminescent material:

a first quantity of a resultant triboluminescent light emanation is admitted by said fiber optic line; and

a second quantity of said resultant triboluminescent light emanation is transmitted by said fiber optic line to said photosensitive device, said second quantity being included in said first quantity;

wherein each said fiber optic line has an exterior membrane and an interior light-transmissive path; and

wherein each said exterior membrane is at least partially light-admissible along at least a portion of the length of the corresponding said fiber optic line, said fiber optic line thereby being admissible of said first quantity of said resultant triboluminescent light.

Claim 25 (canceled)

Claim 26 (canceled)

Claim 27 (canceled)

Claim 28 (canceled)

Claim 29 (canceled)

Claim 30 (currently amended): A method as defined in claim [[22]] 24, wherein at least one of the following obtains:

said integrating triboluminescent material with said object includes selecting at least one location at which said object is susceptible to damage; and

said associating of said at least one fiber optic line with said photosensitive device includes selecting at least one location at which said object is susceptible to damage.

Claim 31 (currently amended): A method as defined in claim 22, ~~wherein of sensing the damage condition of an object, said method comprising:~~

~~integrating triboluminescent material with said object;~~

~~said method further comprises providing at least one said fiber optic line; and~~

~~associating at least one fiber optic line with said object and with a photosensitive device so that, following a damage-causing event accompanied by a mechanical action upon at least some said integrated triboluminescent material, a quantity of a resultant triboluminescent light emanation is transmitted by said at least one fiber optic line to said photosensitive device;~~

~~wherein said at least one fiber optic line includes at least two fiber optic line portions which are at least partially light-admissible;~~

~~wherein each said fiber optic line portion is admissible only to light of a corresponding wavelength; and~~

~~wherein at least two said corresponding wavelengths are different.~~